

*I Ain't  
Beggin'  
Nobody*

L  
A  
R  
R  
Y  
  
D  
A  
V  
I  
S



# L a r r y D a v i s

## I AIN'T BEGGIN' NOBODY

1. I AIN'T BEGGIN' NOBODY (2:59)  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
2. SNEAKING AROUND (4:12)  
(Robinson) Crawford Music, BMI
3. GIVING UP ON LOVE (5:29)  
(L. Davis) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
4. I'M COMING HOME (4:43)  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
5. LITTLE ROCK (4:27)  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
6. PLEASE DON'T GO (4:05)  
(C. Willis)
7. LAST NIGHT (5:20)  
(W. Jacobs) Arc Music, BMI
8. I'M A ROLLIN' STONE (3:42)  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
9. I'VE GOT MY EYES ON YOU (3:20)  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI

PRODUCER: OLIVER SAIN  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: SAM VALENTI

ECD 26016-2

LARRY DAVIS ▪ Vocal and Guitar  
OLIVER SAIN ▪ Alto & Tenor Sax,  
Organ and Piano  
PHIL WESTMORELAND ▪ Guitar  
RONNIE GUYTON ▪ Bass Guitar  
KEITH ROBINSON ▪ Drums

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO



© & © 1993 EVIDENCE MUSIC INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. MADE IN THE U.S.A.

WARNING: UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION OF THIS RECORDING AND ARTWORK IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW AND SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.





# Larry Davis

## I Ain't Beggin' Nobody

Larry Davis secured his place in Blues history way back in 1958 with his recording of the classic *Texas Flood*. With its stirring emotional vocal coupled with Fenton Robinson's strident guitar, *Texas Flood* is now considered a Blues standard. However, recognition and acclaim have not come easy to this multi-talented bluesman, and the fine reputation he enjoys today is not the result of one hit record. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Larry has chosen to remain living in the South. Perhaps due to this, and the fact that his powerful stage show remained tailored to a black audience (much the same way as Little Milton, Bobby Bland, and Little Johnny Taylor's have), Larry has been neglected, until recently, by the new young Blues audience. When I first interviewed Larry Davis in 1979 for Blues Unlimited, there had been no major festival appearances or acceptance on the lucrative college circuit, no European tours, and despite a handful of excellent 45's, no album. But eight years can make quite a difference and Larry's career has come full circle; I now have the privilege of writing these liner notes to this, his third album.

Larry Davis was born on December 4th, 1936 in Kansas City, Missouri and the family eventually settled in Little Rock, Arkansas when Larry was seven years old. It was in the school band that he first started to play drums. In the late 1940s and early 1950s both Little Rock and neighboring North Little Rock could boast a small but flourishing Blues scene. By age fifteen Larry was playing drums with local harmonica player (and occasional member of the King Biscuit Boys) Sunny Blair. Following the stint with Blair, Larry then joined a band led by Gilbert Cables. Playing a mixture of Jazz, Blues and ballads, Larry remained with the Cables band for a couple of years, playing frequent jobs at The Flamingo and The Eldorado in Little Rock and occasional gigs at Sunbeams on Beale & Hernando in Memphis. It was also during this period that Larry first met B.B. King, while he was appearing at the Morocco in Little Rock. It was B.B. along with Roy Brown, Nat Cole, and later, Little Willie John who were to influence Larry's future vocal style.

Around 1955-56 Larry met guitarist Fenton Robinson, having arrived from Memphis with another fine guitar player, Charles McGowan. Billed as The McGowan Brothers, the duo was appearing at The Flamingo in Little Rock and soon leaving for St. Louis when Larry decided to join them. For Larry Davis, this was the start of a long and enduring relationship with both Fenton and St. Louis. Once established in St. Louis, they played regularly at The Moonlight Lounge, The Shadow Box, and Ned Love's in Firework Station, East St. Louis. However, the group disbanded when Fenton decided to return South, and Larry joined the popular Roosevelt Marks Band as vocalist.

By 1957, Larry, who had now switched from drums to bass, was back in Little Rock in the company of

Charles McGowan and vocalist/drummer Billy Gayles, who had recently parted company with Ike Turner. Recruiting pianist Ernest Lane, who was working for club owner Jim Lindsey, the quartet headed for California. Larry stayed almost a year before returning to Little Rock, and teamed up once again with Fenton Robinson in a group that often included Can Man Hewitt on drums.

Two frequent visitors to Little Rock at the time were the ever popular Junior Parker and Bobby Bland. Impressed with the talents of Larry and Fenton, Bland recommended the dynamic duo to Don Robey, owner of Duke/Peacock Records in Houston, with whom Bland and Parker were signed. Robey wired the pair one hundred dollars and they were on their way to Houston for the now historic session. It was an auspicious start with both Fenton and Larry recording, but while the successful *Texas Flood* provided him with a measure of fame, the money didn't exactly "flood" in from the record, as Larry remembered in a Blues Unlimited interview: "So I had a big record, I don't know how big, but it was big. We didn't get no royalty statements or nothing, Robey kept all that stuff." Two more sessions for Duke followed in 1959. The first produced an excellent reworking of Doctor Clayton's *Angels in Harlem* while the second session had Larry cast in a more typical Duke mold, somewhat reminiscent of Bobby Bland. Unfortunately, neither of those two records matched the success of *Texas Flood*. Despite a five-year contract, this would prove to be his entire recorded output from Duke. This leaves us to speculate the reason why Robey chose to leave him on the shelf for the next three years!

Steady work followed during the next decade with Larry often working in St. Louis, including a period spent working with Albert King's band, sharing the billing with Albert's female vocalist Shirley Brown, who was then known as Little Shirley. Nevertheless, a new recording contract eluded him until 1968.

Following one of B.B. King's shows in St. Louis, Larry had the good fortune to run into his old friend after-hours at The Manhattan in East St. Louis. B.B. was preparing to start his own company, Virgo Records and immediately arranged for Oliver Sain to produce the first session. Larry rerecorded *The Years Go Passing By*, the Peppermint Harris number Fenton Robinson had previously cut for Duke. The flip was an Oliver Sain composition, *Whole World Down On You*. *Passing By*, with some promotion from B.B., started to sell well in several local markets, especially in St. Louis and Little Rock where it received substantial air play.

Virgo, in spite of its promising debut, proved to be a very short-lived venture. B.B. King's career had been rejuvenated since the release of *Paying The Cost To Be The Boss* and *Why I Sing The Blues* and his subsequent discovery by the new white market left no time for the administration of a record company. This resulted in Larry's contract being sold to Kent Records, but not before Larry had recorded enough material for a proposed Virgo album, which consisted of reworkings of early B.B. material, most of which eventually saw the light of day as singles on Kent and Pisces Records. A couple of sessions in Los Angeles for Kent followed, from which only one single was issued. Produced by Maxwell Davis, the self-penned *I've Been Hurt So Many Times*, coupled with *For 5 Long Years* (not the Eddie Boyd version) sank without a trace. Larry was never happy during his tenure with

Kent or with the unsuitable material they tried to hoist upon him, some of which still remains unissued. He soon obtained his release.

It was also around 1970 that Larry made another change, this time switching from bass to guitar. He now set about the business of achieving a distinctive style, one that would set him apart from the rest. With a sound that was fluid and piercing to accompany his high soaring vocals, he began to realize his ambitions. The influence of B.B. and Albert King and Fenton Robinson are apparent, but what evolved in style and sound was pure Larry Davis.

In 1973 he was once again back in the studio, this time in Memphis cutting the catchy *Find-Em Fool-Em And Forget-Em* and B.B.'s *Same Thing They Did To Me* for Bobby King's Hub City. Sessions following in 1974/75/76 for True Soul in Little Rock with varying success. The gospel overtones of *Tears of Sorrow* coupled with *Pouring Water On A Drowning Man* was superb, although its follow up *Down Home Funk* was unfortunately tedious. With little distribution both the True Soul releases were probably never heard outside of Arkansas. Today much of the True Soul material remains unissued.

Sometime around 1980 Larry was recorded live at J.B. Hutto's in St. Louis for what was to be his debut album. Sadly, the album was only issued in Japan (on P-Vine), and only a few copies filtered out, doing little to further his career. In early 1981 Larry once again returned to Oliver Sain's studio in St. Louis. In the company of St. Louis' finest sidemen— Johnny Johnson, Phil Westmoreland, Billy Gayles and the multi-talented Oliver Sain—he recorded the critically acclaimed Rooster album **Funny Stuff**. The following year Larry won a pair of Handy Awards, **Funny Stuff** was voted Contemporary Blues Album Of The Year and *Since I Been Loving You/Walk Out Like a Lady* which was pulled from the album, was voted Blues Single of the Year. With a successful album to his credit, Larry was at last brought to the attention of a greater audience, including a long overdue European tour.

Oliver Sain was also waiting for a chance to produce Larry again, and in 1985 work began on this album. Oliver Sain: "I've been struck with his style all this time, I've always believed in him". Numerous sessions were held over a period of a few months, resulting in an album of well-crafted contemporary Blues. Oliver Sain originals and interesting reworkings of B.B.'s *Sneaking Around* and Little Walter's *Last Night*, displaying Larry's penchant for emotional Blues ballads, help set the powerful emotional tone of this album by one of today's most compelling Blues artists.

—Bill Greensmith, 1987

For a complete catalog and further information, write:

Evidence Music

1100 E. Hector Street, Suite 392

Conshohocken, PA 19428

*Warning:* Unauthorized reproduction of this recording and artwork is prohibited by Federal law and subject to criminal prosecution.

Evidence thanks you for purchasing this compact disc.





(Left to right) Oliver Sain, Larry Davis, and Phil Westmoreland in Oliver Sain's studio.

1. **I AIN'T BEGGIN' NOBODY (2:59)**  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
2. **SNEAKING AROUND (4:12)**  
(Robinson) Crawford Music, BMI
3. **GIVING UP ON LOVE (5:29)**  
(L. Davis) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
4. **I'M COMING HOME (4:43)**  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
5. **LITTLE ROCK (4:27)**  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
6. **PLEASE DON'T GO (4:05)**  
(C. Willis)
7. **LAST NIGHT (5:20)**  
(W. Jacobs) Arc Music, BMI
8. **I'M A ROLLIN' STONE (3:42)**  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI
9. **I'VE GOT MY EYES ON YOU (3:42)**  
(O. Sain) Saico/Blue Top, BMI



© & © 1993 EVIDENCE MUSIC INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. MADE IN THE U.S.A.

**LARRY DAVIS**  
Vocal and Guitar

**OLIVER SAIN**  
Alto & Tenor Sax,  
Organ, and Piano

**PHIL WESTMORELAND**  
Guitar

**RONNIE GUYTON**  
Bass Guitar

**KEITH ROBINSON**  
Drums

**Recorded and Mixed**  
New Day Studios, St. Louis, MO  
**Mastering Engineer**  
Dave Shirk

**Photography**  
Bill Greensmith

**Background Photography**  
J.D. Photography, St. Charles, MO

**Cover Design**  
Paula Gaertner

**Executive Producer**  
Sam Valenti

**Producer and Engineer**  
Oliver Sain

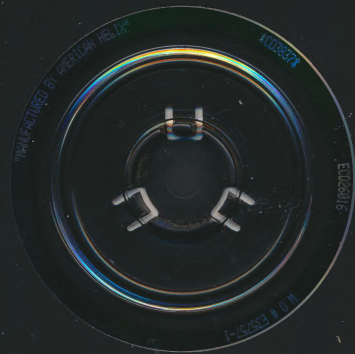
**Graphic Design**  
Imageworks

**Licensed from**  
Pulsar Records

ECD 26016

# LARRY DAVIS

## I AIN'T BEGGIN' NOBODY



COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO

ECD 26016

© 1993 Evidence Music, Inc.

All rights reserved.

Warning: Unauthorized duplication  
of this material is a violation  
of applicable laws.

LICENSED FROM PULSAR RECORDS

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. I AIN'T BEGGIN' NOBODY | 6. PLEASE DON'T GO         |
| 2. SNEAKING AROUND        | 7. LAST NIGHT              |
| 3. GIVING UP ON LOVE      | 8. I'M A ROLLIN' STONE     |
| 4. I'M COMING HOME        | 9. I'VE GOT MY EYES ON YOU |
| 5. LITTLE ROCK            |                            |